

## IC ANNUAL FOIA REPORT FY 2018

**Please complete the following worksheet and return it to the NIH FOIA Office by 2:00pm, Thursday, October 18, 2018. NO EXTENSIONS WILL BE GRANTED**

### PART I - FOIA Contact Information

IC: NIAAA

Name of Person Completing the Report: Trevor Peterson

Title: FOI Coordinator

Address: 31/6A11 Phone Number: (301) 496-4334

### PART II – FOIA Request Data

- a. Number of FOIA requests pending at the end of FY 2017: 2 (This number was taken from the report you submitted last year)
- b. Number of FOIA requests received during FY 2018: 22
- c. Number of FOIA requests processed during FY 2018: 22
- d. Number of FOIA requests pending at the end of FY 2018: 2

**NOTE:  $a + b - c = d$**

### PART III - Cost Information

#### A. Personnel

- 1. How many full-time FOIA staff does your IC have: 0

NOTE: A “full-time FOIA employee” is a full-time employee or contractor who performs FOIA duties 100% of the time.

- 2. How many “Equivalent Full-Time FOIA Employees” work in your IC. **Provide this number in work years:** 0.11

**NOTE:** Employees or contractors performing less than full-time FOIA duties are either a) part-time employees who perform FOIA duties all, or part, of the time, or b) full-time employees who perform FOIA duties less than 100% of the time.

To determine the number in work years, ask everyone who does FOIA on a part-time or occasional basis to estimate the amount of time - in percents - they spend on FOIA related duties. Each 100% equals one full-time equivalent. You should include contractors if they are working on some aspect of FOIA.

**Example 1:**

Employee 1 – performs FOIA duties 20% of her time  
Employee 2 – performs FOIA duties 35% of his time  
Employee 3 – performs FOIA duties 75% of his time  
Employee 4 – performs FOIA duties 15% of her time

In this example, the FOIA duties of these employees equals 145% of the time ( $20 + 35 + 75 + 15 = 145$ ) and **this IC would report 1.45 in this section** ( $145/100 = 1.45$ )

**Example 2:**

Employees 1, 2, 3 and 4 – perform FOIA duties 50% of their time  
Employee 5 – performs FOIA duties 75% of his time  
Employee 6 – performs FOIA duties 10% of her time

In this example the FOIA duties of these employees equals 285 % ( $50 \times 4 + 75 + 10 =$  ) and **this IC would report 2.85 in this section** ( $285/100 = 2.85$ ).

3. Total number of “Full-Time FOIA Staff” \_\_\_\_\_ ( $1 + 2 = 3$ ).

**B. Costs**

1. Processing Costs - Cost to your IC for FOIA processing during FY 2017: \$12,000

**NOTE:** Add together all costs expended by your IC for processing FOIA requests at both the initial request and the administrative appeal level. **Include salaries of FOIA personnel, overhead and any other FOIA-related expenses.** Salary information can be calculated by multiplying the annual salary of the employee by the percentage of time spent on FOIA (necessary to complete Section A). If your IC has a budget for your office, that may be a good source for this information.

**\*\*Part IV should be completed and returned to the NIH FOIA Office no later than COB, Monday, October 22, 2018.\*\***

**\* Any reference to “agency” means “IC”**

PART IV –Pro-Active Disclosures (Timeframe: March 2017 – present) This information is for the Annual Chief FOIA Officer’s Report which is submitted to HHS in early December. These are the questions posed in the report. Please check with your Communications Office as well as any other offices that generally post information to collect as many examples as you can. The submission should explain what was posted succinctly and include the link.

### **Steps Taken to Increase Proactive Disclosures**

Both the [President’s](#) and [DOJ’s](#) FOIA memoranda focused on the need for agencies to work proactively to post information online without waiting for individual requests to be received.

Please answer the following questions to describe the steps your agency has taken to increase the amount of material that is available on your agency websites. In addition to the questions below, you should also describe any additional steps taken by your agency to make and improve proactive disclosures of information.

#### **Posting Material:**

1. Describe your agency’s process or system for identifying “frequently requested” records that should be posted online.

Most of the Institute’s FOIA requests pertain to non-public records with potentially sensitive information, e.g. grant or contract proposals which may include confidential trade secrets or commercial property such as patentable material, and personal information of individuals associated with the proposals. Information with relevance to the public that does not fall in this category is posted on the NIAAA website.

2. Does your agency have a distinct process or system in place to identify other records for proactive disclosure? If so, please describe your agency’s process or system.

Information with relevance to the public that does not contain sensitive information is posted on the NIAAA website. NIAAA complies with federal policies on handling sensitive information. The Institute’s funding information is available centrally through NIH RePORTER.

3. Has your agency encountered challenges that make it difficult to post records you otherwise would like to post?

No

4. If so, briefly explain those challenges and how your agency is working to overcome them.

5. Provide examples of material that your agency has proactively disclosed during the past reporting year, including links to the posted material

An example of materials that are proactively disclosed is the proceedings of the National Advisory Council on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, an advisory body to the NIAAA Director. Available at <http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/about-niaaa/advisory-council>, this information includes the Council meeting agendas, the NIAAA Director's reports to the Council, and minutes from Council meetings which are open to the public. These meetings occur three times per year. NIAAA also discloses information about Funding Opportunity Announcements and research policies through its website. For example, NIAAA provides hyperlinks to Requests for Applications and Program Announcements issued by the Institute or that involve NIAAA participation as well as policy information about the submission of grant proposals for conference support and genome wide association studies at <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/funding-opportunities>.

6. Did your agency use any means to publicize or highlight important proactive disclosures for public awareness? If yes, please describe these efforts.

NIAAA used a range of services for providing information to the public, including an online calendar of upcoming events, posts of latest news to its home page, news releases, Twitter feeds, and GovDelivery.

#### **Other Initiatives:**

7. If there are any other steps your agency has taken to improve proactive disclosures, please describe them here. For example, has your agency engaged requesters in determining how and what to post? Has your agency used web analytics to inform your proactive disclosures?

#### **Steps Taken to Greater Utilize Technology**

A key component of the President's [FOIA Memorandum](#) was the direction to "use modern technology to inform citizens about what is known and done by their Government." In addition to using the internet to make proactive disclosures, agencies should also be exploring ways to utilize technology in responding to requests.

Please answer the following questions to describe how your agency is utilizing technology to improve its FOIA administration and the public's access to information. You should also include any additional information that describes your agency's efforts in this area.

#### **Making Material Posted Online More Useful:**

1. Beyond posting new material, is your agency taking steps to make the posted information more useful to the public, especially to the community of individuals who regularly access your agency's website?

Yes

2. If yes, please provide examples of such improvements.

NIAAA is undertaking an effort to improve organization of health content on its website to make it easier for the general public to find.

3. Have your agency's FOIA professionals interacted with other agency staff (such as technology specialists or public affairs or communications professionals) in order to identify if there are any new ways to post agency information online?

The NIAAA communications team is responsible for identifying innovative ways of sharing information online that are consistent with NIH and HHS guidelines, e.g. Twitter and Instagram. NIAAA FOIA requests are usually for non-public information; however, if public information was routinely requested through FOIA, then the FOIA coordinator could assist in identifying specific information to post on the NIAAA website.

#### **Use of Technology to Facilitate Processing of Requests:**

4. Did your agency conduct training for FOIA staff on any new processing tools during the reporting period, such as for a new case management system, or for search, redaction, or other processing tools?

No

5. Beyond using technology to redact documents, is your agency taking steps to utilize more advanced technology to facilitate overall FOIA efficiency, such as improving record search capabilities, utilizing document sharing platforms for consultations and referrals, or employing software that can sort and de-duplicate documents? If yes please describe:

- The technological improvements being made.
- The impact of using these technologies on your agency's request processing.

Yes—migrating to FOIAXpress with the rest of NIH

6. Are there additional tools that could be utilized by your agency to create further efficiencies?